

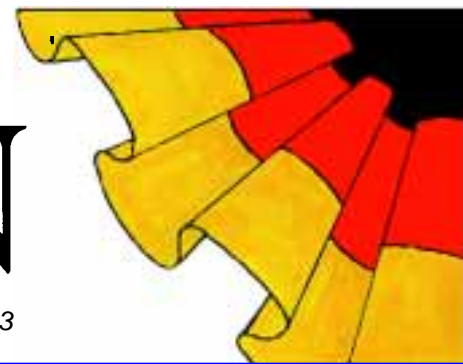


THE CITIZEN

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Stuttgart, Bad Aibling, Oberammergau and Garmisch, Germany

Stuttgart athletes soar to success



Hugh C. McBride
The Stuttgart Stallions' Chad Searcy prepares to set one down with authority during a slam-dunk contest on the final evening of Stuttgart's Tournament of Champions. Searcy was a key component in the Stallions' run to the tournament championship.

Adversity no match for area's winter sports standouts

By Hugh C. McBride

From the mat to the court to the pool, Stuttgart-area athletes made a practice of turning up the heat on their opponents throughout the 2002-2003 winter sports seasons.

Faced with challenges that included budget cuts, injuries, deployments and a heightened security posture, male and female athletes as young as 9 and as old as, well, much older than 9 were able to maintain the focus necessary to triumph in their respective disciplines.

The youngest of these champions were the Stuttgart Piranhas, whose six-month swim across Europe concluded with the European Forces Swim League's Championship meet in Munich's historic *Olympiaschwimmhalle*.

Page 15 of this edition chronicles the Piranhas' pursuit of the Rhineland Division championship and their performance in the season's culminating event.

Moving up the age scale, the Patch High School Panthers wrestling team overcame fears of a cancelled season and the extended absence of their coach to qualify every grappler for a spot in the Department of Defense Dependents Schools' European Championship meet.

To read about which two Panthers brought European crowns back to Stuttgart – and which athlete triumphed over what was thought to be a season-

Deployments and an increased operational tempo were challenges, but they had no apparent effect on the intensity and athleticism of those who competed.

ending injury – turn to page 14.

Also on page 14 are the results of Stuttgart's annual Tournament of Champions community-level basketball extravaganza, which took place Feb. 14 to 16 in the Patch Barracks and Panzer Kaserne fitness centers.

Though deployments and an increased operational tempo caused the tournament to shrink in size from previous years, they had no apparent effect on the intensity and athleticism of those who were able to compete.

On the local level, the 6th Area Support Group recently crowned the champions of its unit-level basketball league – and though the pre-season favorites were there at the end, they had to settle for the third spot on the winner's platform.

Again, turn to page 14 to read the local league results.

In our March 25 edition, we will continue our winter sports round-up and take a look ahead at the 2003 spring sports schedule.

INSIDE THIS EDITION

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EUCOM chief of staff speaks about security

Lt. Gen. John B. Sylvester, Headquarters, U.S. European Command chief of staff, says no one is exempt from force protection responsibilities.



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WIC Overseas opens office on Patch Barracks

Area service members and civilians now have access to the government-sponsored food and nutrition education program.

